

Fond du Lac County

LISA FREIBERG, COUNTY CLERK

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February 8, 2012

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160 South Macy Street, P.O. Box 1557
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Chairwoman Mary Lazich
Senate Committee on Transportation and Elections
300 Southeast, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Chairwoman Lazich and Honorable Members of the Committee:

I am unable to attend but would like to submit testimony regarding Senate Bill 386, as I believe State Statute 6.28(2) should be repealed.

While I believe every person should be given an opportunity to register to vote, I do not believe high schools should be burdened with providing this opportunity. Ample options already exist for voter registration, including by mail, in person with the municipal clerk or county clerk. Since Wisconsin does allow Election Day registration this is a perfect time to register to vote. If these young people have a question, the Election Officials will take the opportunity to answer the question and walk them through the Election process. Furthermore, the Government Accountability Board is developing a program which would allow online voter registration. Surely, this option would prove popular with our tech-savvy youth.

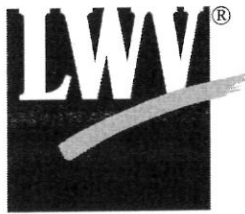
Much of the burden of registering voters at high schools comes from the fact that these potential voters – high school students and staff members alike – live in different municipalities and even counties. This is prevalent at private schools and due to school choice. Because of this, municipal clerks representing each student and staff member in the school would need to appoint special school registration deputies.

It would be a shame if the burden State Statute 6.28(2) places on municipal clerks and school districts is for naught. In 2009, a team from Leadership Fond du Lac registered high school students for a project. The registration was done in March, one month prior to the election. Of the approximate 80 students who registered, five voted. This project clearly showed that although the students had the opportunity to register to vote, they did not participate in voting on Election Day. The numerous resources that voter registration requires are hard to justify for the poor rate of return on the extra time used for this effort.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If I can provide further insight, please don't hesitate to call, (920) 929-3000.

Sincerely,

Lisa Freiberg
Fond du Lac County Clerk



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF
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February 9, 2012

To: Senate Committee on Transportation and Elections

Re: Opposition to Senate Bill 386

In 1971 the twenty-sixth amendment to the U.S. Constitution was passed in recognition of the fact that young people who work, pay taxes, enlist in the military and fight for their country should be allowed to vote. The amendment lowered the voting age to 18, opening the way for young people to register and vote while they are still in high school.

What a wonderful opportunity to educate and motivate young citizens to participate in their government! Schools are an excellent and extremely appropriate environment in which to cultivate good citizenship, along with scholarship and career readiness.

Current Wisconsin law takes advantage of that opportunity by requiring high schools to work with local election officials to appoint someone to serve as a special voter registration deputy for the purpose of registering students and staff at each school. The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin opposes SB 386, which would eliminate this requirement.

We ask, what problem could this bill possibly solve that is worth the lost opportunity to nurture citizenship in young people?

We urge you to oppose this legislation. Thank you.



PAT STRACHOTA

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Committee on Election and Campaign Reform

SB386

January 25, 2012

Good morning. I want to thank the chair and members of the Committee for hearing my testimony today.

While I was having local office hours in my district a town clerk had mentioned that they needed to train and certify a representative from the local high schools to be able to register students and faculty to vote at the high school campus. After speaking with other local clerks and both school districts in my district that were also unaware of this law, I began to look deeper into the situation.

According to the Government Accountability Board this is not a new law but one that was passed in 1976; Wisconsin State Statute 6.28 (2) mandating high schools to have a municipal clerk or certified high school staff available to register students and faculty to vote. Currently, this law is not being followed uniformly throughout the state.

At the age of 18 many feel like they are adults and want to be treated like adult. So why should we treat them any different than you or I? Students today have the options to print forms right off the internet, driving to their local clerk's office to register, or same day registration unlike their 1976 counterparts.

SB386 repeals this out-dated mandate. It will help provide efficiency, save resources, and save money for many of our local clerk's offices. Thank you once again for taking the time to listen to me.